



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

" Ay, gaze on its large hilt,
 One wedge of red gold ;
 But doat on its blade, gilt
 With blood of the bold.
 The hilt is right seemly,
 But nobler the blade,
 That swart Velint's hammer
 With cunning spells made ;
 I call it the Adder,
 Death lurks in its bite,
 Through bone and proof-harness
 It scatters pale light.
 Fair daughter of Einar,
 Deem high of the fate
 That/makes thee, like this blade,
 Proud Egill's loved mate !

So Jarl Egill bore off Torf Einar's bright daughter."

— pp. 36, 37.

-
14. — *Theory of Teaching, with a few Practical Illustrations.*
 By a Teacher. Boston : E. P. Peabody. 1841.
 12mo. pp. 123.

It is stated in an introductory note to this pamphlet, that "these letters are part of a real correspondence, begun in order to systematize the writer's own theory and practice. The position of governess was assumed, as the most favorable one for carrying out completely her ideas on education." Works on education have become so abundant, that we rarely look into a new volume upon so threadbare a theme, with any expectation, either of interest, or novelty, or instruction. But no one can read this little book without finding himself in the presence of a mind amply able to furnish him with all three. What we are most struck with, in reading these delightful letters, is the rare union they display of genius and common sense. The power of style which the writer possesses is remarkable. Her English flows in a copious stream of happily chosen phraseology, at once finished and eloquent. An imagination, that frequently kindles into poetry, gives a brilliant coloring to discussions of the dry details upon the art of teaching, while the deep sympathies of her womanly heart animate them with a humane spirit, better than eloquence, better than poetry. These pages not only show an original genius, but a rich and polished literary cultivation ; they are embellished with illustrations very felicitously applied from various departments of elegant letters. They show a

remarkable range of thought, both upon the topics which are more immediately discussed, and upon human nature in general. The author must have looked upon society with an observant eye, and pondered long and deeply, in the recesses of an intellect such as few possess, upon the gathered wisdom of a studious and thoughtful youth. Her knowledge of the character and wants of the young seems to be exact and comprehensive; and her perception of the proper moral, as well as intellectual influence, to which their opening minds ought to be subjected, is at once clear and profound. The volume is one to which the teacher may resort for instruction in the technical details of his profession, and, what is much better, to refresh his wearied spirit with the persuasive strains of an eloquence, into which varied knowledge and lofty moral feeling have poured their richest treasures; and the man of literary taste may open its pages, sure to find there many a passage of exquisite elegance, many an unsought felicity of expression, many a deep and striking philosophical remark. What an influence must such an intellect and such a heart exercise upon the plastic characters of the young!

We shall not undertake to analyze the contents of this excellent work, but proceed to give two or three among the many passages which we have marked while reading it.

Speaking of conflicting systems, our author thus discourses;

“Many words and anxieties have been expended on school education, which seems to be the best education for girls in our society; but they have been uttered in various corners, by mothers, whose instincts made them wise,—or partially and often dogmatically, and as complete systems, by teachers. When a teacher perceives the advantage of any one mode, as the Pestalozzian, or that of oral instruction, he is apt to be carried away by its success, and forget the advantages of a different course. Perhaps he has himself been for years subjected to drilling, and received the first instruction addressed to his understanding as light from heaven;—henceforth drilling, learning by rote, are banished from his system, and thoroughness and accuracy too often follow. He forgets what he himself may owe to them, and hurries forth to free all little slaves, with the light which made him free. His system suits some children, and obtains the confidence of their parents; to others it speaks in vain. Meanwhile, in another little flock quite an opposite system, calling forth their energies in a different manner, works wonders. The parents of the successful ones are equally pleased. Parties are naturally formed; there is on both sides ample evidence of success and failure; the confidence of the parents is lost; the children are perplexed when they pass from one to another; and we have scholars admirably developed in some respects, but on the whole, crude, incomplete, unpolished.

“I am not so Quixotic as to try to prevent human nature from running into extremes, and seizing partial views of any subject. But I think we ought not to rest in such views, and that a person who lives

in society is inexcusable if he does not attempt to add his segment to others, until together they embrace the whole subject."— pp. 22, 23.

To which we add, from the same letter, another admirable passage.

"Do not you think that the parents' want of confidence is communicated to the pupils and chills the master? You know in our society cultivated and uncultivated women mingle on an equal footing, a slight covering of grace and manner concealing from one another, and even from themselves, wherein they differ. The ignorant among these are perhaps quite as ambitious for their daughters as the well-informed, and, having heard a certain study or practice recommended, insist on it, to the great injury of the pupil and teacher.

"I have so much faith in the maternal feeling, that I have no doubt, if pains were taken to ascertain the best studies for girls at each age, mothers would adopt them. After doing all in their power for a daughter, they are frequently disappointed; she leaves school wholly ignorant of some important branches, and regrets that no wise friend stood by to urge them; or she feels that her school hours have been wasted in accommodating to one change after another.

"How are we to inspire parents with this confidence? There is in this country no authority, not even experience, to create it. We must deserve it. We must survey the whole ground, and lay it out with our best wisdom. We must gain insight into the subject, and consider the circumstances peculiar to our country; and we shall not then complain of want of confidence. If we are faithful, mothers will soon find it out; there is no want of seeking, and reflecting, and toiling on their part. Their wasted exertion is one of the most melancholy features of the present mode of education. How often have I seen a mother foregoing all social enjoyment, devoting her weary evenings to the grammar and the Latin lesson, wasting herself and her children in fruitless attempts to accomplish what they have never been trained to attain. I have been tempted to say, 'It is too late,— habits of observation, of examining any little phenomenon, of persevering, of proceeding step by step,— some such natural lesson given ten years since, and this would have been an intellectual sport. Begin early,— this is the great secret of all undertakings. Do not let children lead the life of vagabonds until they present themselves to the unfortunate master. No matter for teaching this or that branch; but teach them to observe, to reflect, to apply, to persevere; in short, to live earnestly, and according to intellectual laws; and they will be prepared for all we can set before them.'"— pp. 25, 26.

We must give one extract more. It is upon the peculiarities of the female character, and the attention they require in the education of girls.

"I must now consider how far organization guides us in the education of girls. Its first indication is one in which all experience, and I should say each person's consciousness, agree,— to cultivate the feelings rather than the intellect. Were the powers of man and woman precisely *alike*, it would be an anomaly in nature. The difference is

one of the wisest provisions of the All-wise, and must be kept in sight in all attempts to unfold woman in her true proportions. We observe at once that all beings claim her love, that her heart is always ready to answer the demands on her intellect. Whatever she sees, knows, touches, she loves. Her love is not only more universal, than that of man, but more fervent, particularly her religious feeling. Let us follow the leadings of nature, and call forth and strengthen feeling in all its forms. She must cherish at the bottom of her heart, deep central fires, making the surface luxuriant. She must have sensibility, hearty sympathy with all human feelings, swift compassion for the afflicted, a heart wide enough to embrace the world, yet delighting to overflow the few with its treasures. When we recall the many occasions on which feeling makes woman seem to us almost divine, we feel that her intellectual developement is far less important. In these hours she beams upon man, far, far above him; but how often, how constantly, does she fall below him! How often is her sweetness turned to gall! She sheds poison where she would pour balm; trifles appear to her mountains, and the mightiest interests take no hold on her light and fickle nature; she cannot understand nor express herself; she moves as in a dream, scattering her precious gifts with sealed eyes. Feeling alone cannot secure her happiness, — it may make her wretched, — and we turn to the enlightening and saving power of the intellect. We would cultivate it for those who are beloved, because it increases, a thousand fold, their delight in loving, — we would cultivate it for the lonely, because it is a safe resource.

“We may infer that the developement of the feelings is of more importance than intellectual culture, because God has not left it to chance or choice. Women, particularly, he surrounds from infancy with all that can excite feeling. They are the cherished objects; they live in the very heart of life, — in the scene where all great events occur, where great griefs are borne, and where all outward action has its rise. Birth, death, sickness, all wounded feelings, seek shelter in home, and through sympathy develope the hearts of wives and daughters. The play of social life, the sweet intercourse of families, the helplessness of infancy and of age, the sufferings of others, all excite and deepen feeling. The daily life of woman derives its interest from the hold which persons have on her feelings; that she may please them, she cultivates the graces and embellishments of life, — she seeks all womanly gifts, — her charmed hands would smooth the pillow, her sweet discourse drive care from the knotted brow; at her approach the little child should cease its wailing. Happy the woman who finds in her own family sufficient objects for such cares, — who knows the delight of blessing, and seeks books only to return, laden with spoils, to well-attuned hearts. But we cannot anticipate such a lot for all children, and it is the part of wisdom to prepare for the most lonely and dreary one.” — pp. 38–40.

We have not selected these passages as the best in the book; they are only a few out of a great many, that fixed our attention during a delightful reading. We hope a pen of such rare powers will not be suffered to remain unemployed.